

## IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-144 (canceled)

Claim 145 (currently amended): A liquid acquisition/distribution structure comprising:

- (1) a top layer that is permeable to a liquid,
- (2) a distribution layer comprising a capillary system of an essentially parallel bundle of synthetic fibers arranged so that in a region their axes are essentially parallel to said top layer, the bundle having (A) an average inter-fiber capillary width of from 25 to 400 microns, (B) a Specific Volume greater than 4.0 cc/gm., and (C) a MPF<sub>B</sub> greater than or equal to 0.14 cc/(den\*hr), providing capillary forces on the liquid when the liquid is in contact with said distribution layer tending to transport the liquid parallel to said top layer, and
- (3) a resistance layer having a resistance layer top surface and a resistance layer bottom surface, said resistance layer provides resistance to transmission of the liquid from said resistance layer top surface to said resistance layer bottom surface.

Claim 146 (original): An absorbent product comprising the liquid acquisition/distribution structure of claim 145 and further comprising an absorbent core beneath said resistance layer.

Claim 147 (original): An absorbent product comprising the liquid acquisition/distribution structure of claim 145 and further comprising an absorbent core partially surrounded by said distribution layer and said resistance layer.

Claim 148 (original): The structure of claim 145 wherein said top layer comprises a perforated film, a calendar bonded sheet, or a spun bonded sheet.

Claim 149 (original): The structure of claim 145 wherein

- (1) said top layer has a top layer upper surface and a top layer lower surface, said top layer lower surface opposing said distribution layer,
- (2) said top layer upper surface has a first contact angle with said liquid,
- (3) said top layer lower surface has a second contact angle with said liquid, and
- (4) said second contact angle is less than said first contact angle.

Claim 150 (canceled)

Claim 151 (canceled)

Claim 152 (previously presented): A liquid acquisition/distribution structure comprising:

- (1) a top layer that is permeable to a liquid,
- (2) a distribution layer comprising a capillary system providing capillary forces on the liquid when the liquid is in contact with said distribution layer tending to transport the liquid parallel to said top layer, and
- (3) a resistance layer having a resistance layer top surface and a resistance layer bottom surface, said resistance layer provides resistance to transmission of the liquid from said resistance layer top surface to said resistance layer bottom surface;

wherein said capillary system comprises a bundle of synthetic fibers for transporting aqueous fluids comprising at least two fibers in a bundle, at least one of said two fibers having a non-round cross-section and a Single Fiber Bulk Factor greater than 4.0 and said bundle having

- (A) a Specific Volume greater than 4.0 cc/gm,

(B) a  $MPF_B/MPF_{SF}$  greater than or equal to 3.0,

(C) a  $MPF_B$  greater than or equal to 0.14 cc/(den\*hr);

wherein said bundle is arranged so that in a region their axes are essentially parallel to said top layer.

Claim 153 (original): The structure according to claim 145 wherein the  $MPF_B$  of the fibers in the distribution layer is greater than 0.005 cc/den\*hr.

Claim 154 (currently amended): The structure according to claim 145 wherein ~~said capillary system comprises a~~ the bundle of synthetic fibers for transporting aqueous fluids ~~comprising~~ comprises at least two fibers in a bundle, at least one of said two fibers having a non-round cross-section and a Single Fiber Bulk Factor greater than 4.0 and said bundle having

~~(A) a Specific Volume greater than 4.0 cc/gm,~~

~~(B) a  $MPF_B/MPF_{SF}$  greater than or equal to 3.0 ;~~

~~(C) a  $MPF_B$  greater than or equal to 0.14 cc/(den\*hr);~~

~~wherein said bundle is arranged so that in a region their axes are essentially parallel to said top layer.~~

Claim 155 (original): The structure according to claim 145 wherein said resistance layer includes regions of relatively high liquid resistivity and a plurality of spatially distinct regions of relatively low liquid resistivity.

Claim 156 (previously presented): The structure according to claim 145, wherein said resistance layer has regions of relatively low liquid resistivity that are sized shaped and arranged to distribute liquid substantially uniformly to an absorbent core beneath said resistance layer.

Claim 157 (original): The structure of claim 145 wherein said capillary system is designed with capillaries fanning out from a region.

Claim 158 (original): The structure of claim 145 wherein said capillary system is designed with capillaries providing a two-dimensional flow pattern.

Claim 159 (original): The structure of claim 145 wherein said structure has a major axis and said capillary system comprises a bundle of fibers aligned with said major axis in a band having a width of no more than one inch.

Claim 160 (original): The structure of claim 145 wherein said distribution layer weighs between one and ten grams and comprises fibers having lengths between ten and seventy centimeters.

Claim 161 (original): The structure of claim 145 wherein said distribution layer weighs between one half and four grams and comprises fibers having lengths between ten and forty centimeters.

Claim 162 (original): The structure of claim 145 wherein said distribution layer weighs between one quarter and two grams and comprises fibers having lengths between seven and twenty-five centimeters.

Claim 163 (original): The structure of claim 145 wherein said distribution layer comprises fibers of a first length and fibers of a second length that is different from said first length.

Claim 164 (previously presented): A liquid acquisition/distribution structure comprising:

- (1) a top layer that is permeable to a liquid and having a region intended for insult by a liquid;
- (2) a resistance layer having a resistance layer top surface and a resistance layer bottom surface, said resistance layer provides resistance to transmission of said liquid from said resistance layer top surface to said resistance layer bottom surface; and
- (3) a distribution layer between the top layer and said resistance layer comprising a capillary system of an essentially parallel bundle of synthetic fibers arranged so that in a region their axes are essentially parallel to said top layer, the bundle having (A) an average inter-fiber capillary width of from 25 to 400 microns, (B) a Specific Volume greater than 4.0 cc/gm, and (C) a MPF<sub>B</sub> greater than or equal to 0.14 cc/(den\*hr), providing capillary forces on the liquid when the liquid is in contact with said distribution layer, said capillary forces tending to transport the liquid substantially parallel to said top layer surface;
- (4) wherein said resistance layer comprises
  - (a) a first region directly beneath said region intended for insult by said liquid,
  - (b) a second region that is separated from said first region,
  - (c) a third region that separates said first region from said second region, and

(d) said first and second regions have a lower resistance to transmission of said liquid from said resistance layer top surface to said resistance layer bottom surface than said third region.

Claim 165 (original): The structure of claim 164 wherein said first region is smaller than said second region.

Claim 166 (original): The structure of claim 164 wherein said first region is about 0.5 centimeters in diameter.

Claims 167-186 (canceled)